Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently amended): A ~~dry etching~~ method for producing a solar cell, ~~etching a surface of a substrate to be etched, said method~~ comprising:

placing a substrate for a solar cell ~~to be etched~~ on an electrode inside a chamber; ~~wherein a part of said chamber is connected to a ground; and~~

covering said substrate ~~to be etched~~ with a plate ~~between said part of said chamber and said electrode~~, wherein said plate is provided with a number of opening portions; and [[,]]

forming textures on a surface of the substrate by using residues being chiefly composed of components of the substrate as an etching mask, wherein a distance between said substrate and a surface of said plate opposing said substrate ~~to be etched and said substrate to be etched~~ in a peripheral portion of said plate is set shorter than a distance between said substrate and said surface opposing said substrate ~~to be etched and said substrate to be etched~~ in a central portion of said plate.

14. (Currently amended): The ~~dry etching~~ method for producing a solar cell according to claim 13, wherein said textures are formed by ~~dry etching method is~~ a reactive ion etching method.

15-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended): A ~~dry etching~~ method for producing a solar cell, ~~etching a surface of a substrate to be etched, said method~~ comprising:

placing a substrate for a solar cell ~~to be etched~~ on an electrode inside a chamber; ~~wherein a part of said chamber is connected to a ground,~~

covering said substrate ~~to be etched~~ with a plate provided with a number of opening portions; ~~and~~

forming ~~fine~~ textures on a surface of said substrate ~~to be etched~~ using residues being chiefly composed of components of the substrate as an etching mask, ~~by applying RF power to said electrode,~~

wherein said plate is provided with a protruding wall ~~is provided to said plate~~ on a surface opposing said substrate ~~to be etched~~ and said protruding wall is separated from a nearest surface of said substrate by a space.

21. (Original): The ~~dry etching~~ method for producing a solar cell according to claim 20, wherein said textures are formed by ~~dry etching method is~~ a reactive ion etching method.

22-23. (Canceled)

24. (New): The method for producing a solar cell according to Claim 13, wherein said plate is provided with a protruding wall on a surface thereof opposing said substrate and said protruding wall is separated from a nearest surface thereof opposing said substrate and said protruding wall is separated from a nearest surface of said substrate by a space.

25. (New): The method for producing a solar cell according to Claim 20, wherein a lower end portion of said protruding wall abuts on said electrode.

26. (New): The method for producing a solar cell according to Claim 20, wherein the substrate for a solar cell is a silicon substrate.